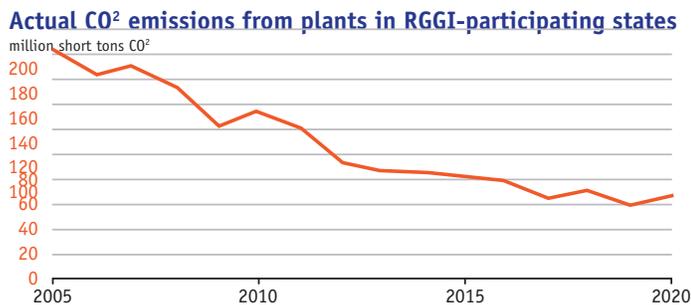


# The Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI) SAVES LIVES AND PROTECTS OUR HEALTH

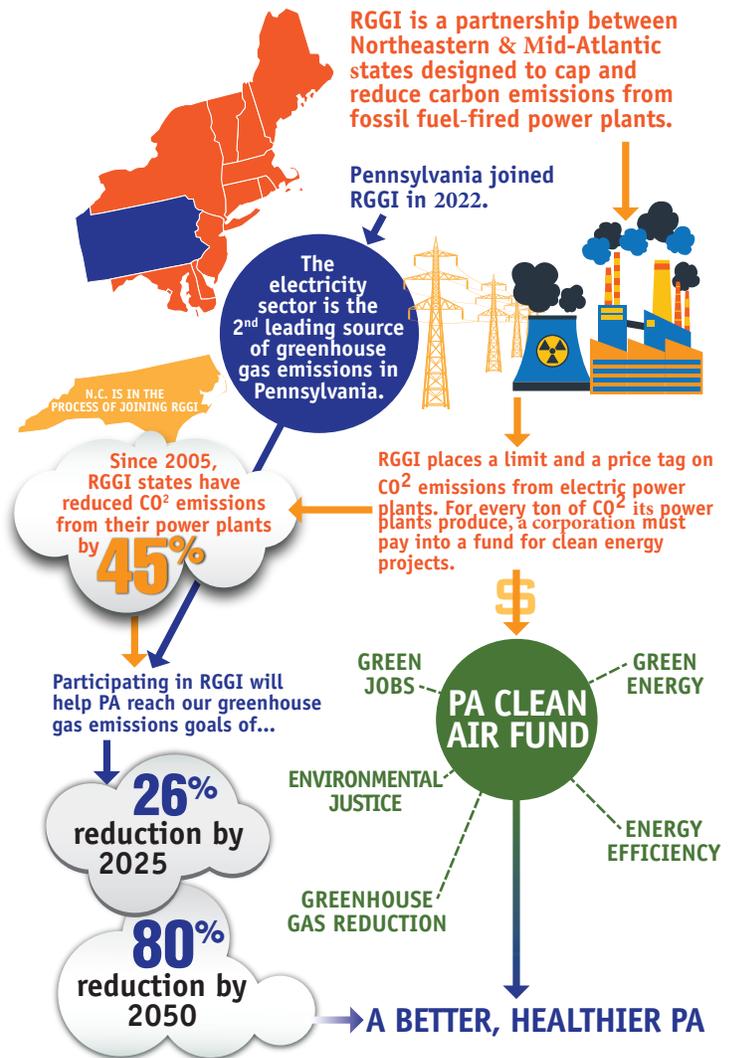
## What is RGGI?

RGGI is a carbon pollution control program that works by requiring electric power corporations to buy “allowances” to cover their plants’ carbon emissions, which encourages them to modernize their plants. Older, dirtier plants, which produce more climate-warming carbon dioxide and other health-harming pollutants, must buy more allowances than newer, more efficient plants, which produce less carbon pollution. The revenue from the purchase of these allowances is then reinvested in clean energy projects.<sup>1</sup>

RGGI has been proven to work! States that participate in RGGI have reduced power sector carbon dioxide pollution by 45% since 2005.<sup>2</sup>



Pennsylvania officially joined to RGGI in July of 2022, although fossil fuel-industry interests are attempting to block it through litigation.



## Why is RGGI a good thing for the health of Pennsylvania families?

**Health issues related to fossil fuel plants and dirty air:**

- Asthma, COPD and other respiratory diseases
- Cardiovascular diseases
- Premature deaths
- Children’s health impacts such as preterm births, low birth weight, and childhood autism

RGGI will cut carbon pollution, which contributes to climate change, by as much as 227 million tons per year in Pennsylvania. It will also reduce harmful pollutants, like mercury, soot, sulfur dioxide, and heavy metals, that come from burning dirty fuels like coal in power plants.<sup>3</sup>

**Joining RGGI means that our air and water will be cleaner, people will be healthier, and we will save on health care costs.**

## Being a part of RGGI has saved states \$5.7 billion in health benefits and savings since 2008.<sup>4</sup>

Expert analysis shows that, with RGGI, there will be<sup>5</sup>:

- 639 fewer premature PA deaths from respiratory illnesses
- 30,000 fewer hospital visits for respiratory illnesses like asthma
- 83,000+ fewer lost workdays due to better health for adults

## Health savings will reach as high as \$6.3 billion by 2030 for Pennsylvania families.<sup>6</sup>

*"Western Pennsylvania's asthma rates are unusually high because of air pollution. In 2019, the Allegheny County Asthma Task Force report estimated that 11% of children in the county are diagnosed with the disease... I was preschool aged when I had my first asthma attack. It was scary. I vividly remember the panic in my mother's eyes as she tried to get me to calm down so I wouldn't pass out ... What is infuriating is that it doesn't have to be this bad for me and so many others who have breathing difficulties ... If you act now, you can improve the lives of so many people and those yet to be born here... You can keep more people healthy and safe and wanting to live here. Needless to say, I support RGGI."*

— Hannah, resident of Pittsburgh and student at the University of Pittsburgh

A poll conducted last year found that 79% of Pennsylvanians (including 66% of Republicans) support placing a limit on carbon pollution from power plants, as RGGI does. Pennsylvanians prefer lawmakers who support strong action to combat climate change.

**HealthfirstPA** supports Pennsylvania dependably remaining a part of RGGI. Pennsylvanians are ready to cut carbon pollution, improve the health of our families, and take advantage of the clean energy opportunities RGGI proceeds could offer the Commonwealth for years to come.



1. <https://www.rggi.org/program-overview-and-design/elements>  
2. RGGI Inc., 2013. States Propose Lowering Regional CO2 Emissions Cap 45%, Implementing a More Flexible Cost-Control Mechanism. Available at: [rggi.org](https://www.rggi.org)  
3. <https://www.wesa.fm/environment-energy/2022-07-09/pennsylvania-climate-rule-trial>  
4. [https://acadiacenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/Acadia-Center\\_RGGI\\_10-Years-in-Review\\_2019-09-17.pdf](https://acadiacenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/Acadia-Center_RGGI_10-Years-in-Review_2019-09-17.pdf)  
5. <https://www.dep.pa.gov/Citizens/climate/Pages/RGGL.aspx>  
6. <https://files.dep.state.pa.us/Air/AirQuality/AQPortalFiles/RGGI/PA%20RGGI%20Health%20Benefits.xlsx>

